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THE EVENING SUN, Per Month, \$3.00  
THE EVENING SUN, Per Year, \$30.00  
THE EVENING SUN, Foreign, Per Year, \$35.00  
All checks, money orders, etc., to be made payable to THE SUN.

Published daily, including Sunday, by the Sun Printing and Publishing Association at 100 Nassau street, in the Borough of Manhattan, New York. Principal office, 100 Nassau street, New York. Vice-President, Edwin W. Wardman, 100 Nassau street, New York. Secretary, H. H. Tamm, 100 Nassau street, New York. Treasurer, W. M. Dewart, 100 Nassau street, New York.  
London office, 40-42 Fleet street.  
Paris office, 4 rue de la Michodiere, en face du Quatre Septembre.  
Washington office, Munsey Building, 1000 Fifteenth street, N. W., Washington, D. C.  
If our friends who favor us with manuscripts and illustrations for publication will be so good as to send them to the editorial office, 100 Nassau street, New York, they will be greatly obliged.  
TELEPHONE, BELKMAN 2200.

**Tell the American People the Truth: They Cannot Fight in the Dark.**  
The demand made this week in the Senate for the truth about our progress in military preparation was an echo of every sane and loyal American. It registered the revolt that is in progress against the policy of secrecy that has been deliberately followed by the Executive department. It indexed the popular longing for the truth concerning what has been done to arm us for our struggle, and if it is not heeded now it will be repeated until it accomplishes its object. That object is to provide for us a stable platform of understanding from which we shall be able to exercise our whole power and develop all our national resources for waging war.

Two theories of administration are in conflict in this country at the present moment. One of them, to which the Executive department has adhered since war began, assumes that the public can be kept in good spirits, that popular enthusiasm can be maintained at a satisfactory stage, only by the suppression of discouraging information and the concealment of failures. The supporters of this theory believe that the American people are not prepared for bad news, for the disclosure of shortcomings and miscalculations, and that confession of the miscarriage of elaborate designs under pressure of actual performance will produce depression seriously impairing national morale.

The other theory is based on a more rational conception of American character. It treats the citizens of this country as creatures possessed of intelligence sufficiently acute to warn them that paper plans are liable to derangement in execution, and to arm them against despair when the circumstances justify only a moderate degree of disappointment. This conception of the American character regards it as strong enough to bear bad news, and solid enough not to abandon hope when an expedition in which confidence has been placed and on which hope has been based fails to produce the desired results in execution.

The first of these theories would surround the public with a painted screen of falsehoods, and fill the minds of the people with the false belief that a race of superadministrators following a superprogramme had attained the hitherto unachieved result of perfection in all their undertakings. It would deceive us about what has been done and what can be done by telling us what was planned; and it would leave us to believe that every plan had been carried to fulfillment without hitch, delay or interruption.

The second theory would inform us of the ambitions entertained by the administrators of our affairs, and would thereafter instruct us, as conditions warranted their disclosure, not only on the successes but on the failures encountered in the effort to fulfill them. It would neither exalt nor depress us unduly, but would frankly reveal the exact situation in which we were placed, and leave to our own sober judgment the facts and only the facts for our guidance.

We have no hesitation in choosing the theory which in our opinion is more likely to effect good results in America.

We reject the contention that the American people are not competent intellectually and spiritually to look the truth squarely in the face without loss of self-reliance and impairment of their determination to do their whole duty. They do not want to live in a fool's paradise of falsehood; and they cannot long continue to live in a dream.

Give the American people the truth. They are strong enough to bear it, resourceful enough and vigorous enough to sustain any trick bad fortune may impose on them.

A factor that appears to have been overlooked in Washington is the tremendous waste of energy consequent on popular misconception of our situation. If the belief is widely held that all goes well, it is inevitable that individuals and associations of individuals will feel—and they will

be entirely justified in so feeling—that the contributions they are making to the national endeavor are adequate. They will maintain the same gait, without attempting to accelerate it. If their belief is unfounded, the nation loses the benefit of the reserve force that might and would be put into the efforts of the individuals composing it. Energy that should be directed toward the correction of abuses is dissipated in non-essential activities; it is devoted to trivialities and consumed uselessly, while the imperative requirements of the community are ignored because they are the closely guarded secrets of a few, and not the business of the many. The unmeasured potential instrumentalities of betterment are unused, and adverse conditions that might be easily remedied as they arise become more difficult of treatment as they remain uncorrected.

In all America there is not a sane and thoughtful man or woman who believed on April 6, 1917, or has believed at any time since that momentous date, that our proceedings in this war would be unmarred by miscalculation, error of judgment, the refractoriness of materials or the blunders of human beings. The calmness of demeanor that has been notably characteristic of our people throughout the last twelve months has been directly attributable to their recognition of the grave dangers that menaced the consummation of their hopes. Men and women who have borne themselves with such restraint are not to be dashed into unreasonable despondency by the discovery of shortcomings which they have schooled themselves to look for in the course of the war.

To these men and women—they are the nation—the truth should be told, subject only to the reservations imposed on free speaking by the exigencies of the country's military needs. Their spirit is in their own keeping, and will not break. Their purpose is too well defined and too deeply held to be debased by untoward incidents encountered in its pursuit. They can adjust themselves to the truth and overcome the handicaps it puts upon them. The only danger that seriously threatens them is the fatal overconfidence bred by ignorance and misinformation, and from this they can and should be rescued by their spokesmen in the national Legislature.

#### Foreign Decorations for American Soldiers and Sailors.

If Senator CHAMBERLAIN's resolution giving the consent of Congress for the acceptance of decorations from foreign Governments by our soldiers and sailors is adopted, the men on whom the French Government has conferred insignia of distinction will be able to wear them on their uniforms, and the British Government will not be balked in its desire to reward in this fashion a number of sailors who have conducted themselves meritoriously. The resolution is made necessary by the section of the Constitution which provides that:

"No title of nobility shall be granted by the United States; and no person holding any office of profit or trust under them, shall, without the consent of the Congress, accept any present, emolument, office, or title, of any kind whatever, from any King, prince, or foreign State."

Congress has refused on numerous occasions to give the consent required for the acceptance of presents by naval, army, and diplomatic officers, but the circumstances of the present war are unprecedented, and the passage of the Chamberlain resolution is urged not only by the War Department, but by General Pershing, who evidently feels that the disqualification under which our men are now is of sufficient consequence to make its removal desirable.

Should Congress grant its permission the men fortunate enough to win decorations for distinguished conduct will be permitted to wear the devices on their uniforms, and we assume that units on which these honors are conferred will display them on their colors. Such tokens of honorable and honored behavior are of the highest importance in stimulating men to live up to the best moments of their lives, and their value to military organizations is indicated by the affection in which men and officers now in the service hold the marks of valor and devotedness won by their predecessors in historic organizations.

The democracy of our institutions is not threatened by this resolution, which would do no more than put our fighting men on the same footing in this matter with their associates in the British and French armies and navies.

#### Burnsides Are a System.

It is a pleasure to assist this Canadian reader out of the etymological morass in which he thus confesses himself to be:

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Will you kindly inform me through the columns of your paper the correct way of expressing side whiskers? Should it be 'Burnsides' or 'sideburns' and how did the word originate?"

"WARREN ALLEN HIGGINS, Toronto, Ontario, March 27."

If the correspondent really has in mind mere side whiskers we advise him to dismiss "Burnsides" and "sideburns" from his mind. Side whiskers, which the Standard Dictionary so deftly defines as "whiskers that grow on the side of the face" are things apart, so to speak, from burnsides and sideburns. Side whiskers may be mutton chops or sideburns. Some are called earlocks by barbers, but this is false usage.

Our purpose, however, is to answer Mr. Higgins so that he shall know just what he wants to know. It

should be "burnsides," not "sideburns." The word comes from the name of that handsome and modest Union General, AMBROSE E. BURNSIDES, who wore 'em. In the process of evolution it loses its capital letter and adopts a final "s," whiskers and allied words often taking the plural form. "Sideburns" are a joke of the period just after the civil war; a distortion of a dignified word.

If "sideburns" was the word Mr. Higgins might feel justified in applying it, with a certain amount of looseness, to various forms of the side whisker. But burnsides are not mere flanking whiskers, but a whole system of beard. They include not only mutton chop brushes of considerable luxuriance, but a mustache as well. There is an unbroken hair-line. If the owner of the burnsides is not too bald, his face north of the chin is surrounded by a charming, if not charmed, circle of hair.

Burnsides are not for the very young. They require for their best cultivation time and care. The mutton chops must flow into and be at one with the mutton chop whiskers; there must be no line of demarcation. The chin that gleams below must be as smooth as new asphalt pavement. No pen can describe burnsides in their perfect form. It is a task for the brush. If Mr. Higgins would know them at their best he should seek a good portrait of General BURNSIDES. If none is available a photograph of the Hon. WILLIAM C. REDFIELD will help a lot.

#### Some Chickens That Are Getting Home to Roost.

Senator GEORGE W. NORRIS, who will be a candidate before the Nebraska Republican primaries for nomination to succeed himself in the United States Senate, is confronted with a war record so far from meeting recently established standards that his supporters find themselves thrust into an explanatory posture far from satisfactory.

Like GRONNA of North Dakota, Mr. NORRIS followed LA FOLLETTE to the very threshold of that no man's land in which Wisconsin's senior Senator now finds himself quarantined in solitary isolation from his fellow members of the Senate. The pompador was his oriflamme. He voted against arming the merchant ships. He voted against the declaration of war. He voted against the selective draft. He voted against the war revenue bill.

Altogether a pretty shady record; as a record on which, under present conditions, to address an appeal for the votes of real Americans, it is far from being all that Mr. NORRIS's friends might desire.

Nebraska is about as badly German-believed as is Wisconsin. It is one of those States in which shifty, time-serving politicians have so long groveled and wallowed in subservience to the impudent demands of racial conceit and racial arrogance that they have fairly been taught to stand up and boast their servitude in the halls of the national Legislature itself whenever they heard the sound of their dachshund master's voice, and this often to the detriment of the country, and now even to its actual peril.

But there are signs of reaction. A clean record of straight, unequivocal loyalty to America and America's purposes in the war, irrespective of the numbers and assertiveness of pro-German constituencies, is fast becoming a sine qua non of political preferment, even in the German-infested districts of the Middle West.

In the case of the Nebraska contest the friends of Mr. NORRIS are clearly uneasy. The Nebraska State Journal of Lincoln, which is supporting him, deprecates the injection of the loyalty issue in the contest. On the other hand, the Omaha Bee demands it, saying:

"It is going to be impossible for any one who, on his record, has been serving the ends of the Kaiser to tickle German constituents to appeal successfully for the votes of patriotic citizens."

There is in sight a wholesome and long needed cleansing of the political atmosphere; a cheering demonstration that even race demagogues chickens get around home to roost at last.

#### Ground Glass.

All reports of the finding of glass in food products should be received with the greatest caution, and should not be accepted unless they are fully and officially confirmed. The probabilities are strong against any such outrage by German agents or by anybody else.

Several alleged instances of the injection of glass in foodstuffs and confectionery have been recorded in various parts of the country. One of these, apparently thoroughly authenticated, caused an official investigation. The result of this inquiry was the establishment of the fact that the suspected substance was entirely free from any deleterious matter whatever, and was thoroughly wholesome in every respect.

A plot to introduce poison into the food of any considerable number of persons would require the cooperation of so many individuals that it would be sure to be discovered before it could become operative.

The act of a maniac might conceivably cause suffering, perhaps serious illness, to one or two or a few persons, but such acts are a common hazard of life to which we are exposed in time of peace at least as much as in time of war.

But any organized plot to poison the population is not to be deduced from the presence of particles of glass in the wrappers of a few loaves of bread, and sensible folk, secure in the knowledge that they deal with repu-

#### ABUSE OF ARMY MEN.

A Veteran at the Border Applauds the New Law in Texas.  
To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: It is a far cry from Printing House Square to Lonesomehurst-on-the-Border, but not so far as Over There, nor yet so far as the Sun paper may keep his liberal education through a daily perusal of your inestimable editorial page. As one who, like Odello, "has done the State some service," and who now, "in the sore and yellow leaf," is still doing his bit so far as regulations or customs of the service will admit, let me say that the new law in Texas is a most gratifying and commendable step.

The recapture of Odessa. A despatch from Moscow yesterday announces the recapture of Odessa by a force composed of Ukrainian and Bolshevik troops under the authority of the Soviet. The recovery of this important Black Sea city marks the first decided stand of the Bolsheviks after the Soviet's determination to reorganize the Russian army, and it discloses a break that has been pending between the Central Powers and Ukraine, which they believed they had successfully established as a subversive vassal state.

The Ukrainian forces engaged were recruited from that portion of the population who had from the first opposed the treaty with Germany. This pact was entered into by a faction which had come under German influence and which by establishing a Government and Parliament at Kiev had set itself up as the representative power of the new nation. Backed by German arms and supplies it had managed to sustain itself and enforce the provisions of the treaty.

The rebellion against the German control began when the Central Powers attempted to enforce their demands for Ukrainian wheat. Not content with the allowance that Ukraine had granted Germany insisted upon eighty-five per cent. of all the wheat and a heavy percentage of other foodstuffs. These exactions led to the overthrow of the pro-German faction and to a more definite understanding with the Soviet at Moscow than had ever before existed. From their mutual mistrust of the Central Powers evidently resulted the present combination to oppose the German attempt to seize the whole of southern Russia.

That this united force of Ukrainians and Bolsheviks has taken advantage of the German concentration on the west front to recover their lost territory is not unlikely. There is no report of the size of the force that the Central Powers had at Odessa other than the announcement made on March 13, at the time of its occupation, that sufficient troops were left to garrison the place. The despatch, however, is to the effect that the city was retaken only after severe fighting. It also says that the Russian Black Sea fleet cooperated with the land forces in the attack. This indicates that this fleet, the fate of which was uncertain at the time of the German occupation of Odessa, did not fall to the captors.

Odessa is the most important port in southern Russia and the greatest naval base on the Black Sea. Its possession means practically the control of this sea. So important was it to the German eastern plans that at the time of its occupation Berlin announced a "direct free route to Persia and Turkestan." The permanent loss of this city means the insecurity of this boasted highway to Central Asia and India. It may mean, too, that the resistance of Russia will develop into something more than that "absolute insignificance" which Berlin had recently so confidently announced.

Prediction that the peach crop throughout New England would be a failure, because of the long and unpropitious winter, was made by H. P. GARDNER, a peach grower, whose orchard contains about 5,000 trees.—Despatch from Westboro, Mass.

New England scores on Delaware by sending the news of the failure of the peach crop first, when will Georgia report on its great orchards?

College athletes wanted in France as physical directors for the troops.—Newspaper headline.

Are there no men now in the service capable of training their comrades in athletics?

Colonel ROOSEVELT started yesterday for Maine, where he will deliver an address to the Republicans at Portland. His fellow countrymen welcome this convincing evidence of his restoration to health, and unanimously hope that the fire in his body has been restored after his recent illness until it is equal to the distressed and unselfish vigor of his mind.

The incarceration of Dr. KARL MICK, conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, involves social upheavals in Boston that those unfamiliar with the classic capital of Massachusetts cannot understand. There will be a row in the Hub worth watching.

In the Senate on Tuesday Senator OVERMAN sought to rebuke Senator BURNETT by saying:

"The Senator is taking this opportunity when I say, we are in great distress to discourage the American people when we need to be enthused instead of disheartened."

Does Senator OVERMAN really believe that the policy to control from a man suffering from headache that he has a serious wound in his leg which needs immediate attention?

The fabricated hull of an 8,800-ton steel ship built for the United States Government was launched at a Pacific port yesterday. Just sixty-two days after the laying of the keel, a record for this type of ship building, sixty-seven days having been the previous record; and while we regret that the record has passed to the Western coast, we are so glad to get another ship that we have no room in our hearts for repining.

Victory has been won, but nobody can see what will result from it.—General von LUDENDORFF.

Manifestly a crib from the well known military observer Old KAPLAN.

Minstrel Testimony at First Hand.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Mr. Seymour forgot to mention Hooley's and Emerson's Megatherium Minstrel, star in number, who opened at Hooley's Theatre, Dearborn street, Chicago, Ill., June 23, 1878. I was a member of the company at the time mentioned.

MAJOR BURK.

New York, March 27.

#### ATHENS, NOT SPARTA.

The Place in History to Look for Genuine Courage.  
To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Mr. Hodgins when he says we don't want any "Spartan spirit" in this country is right. I have often thought of Sparta in connection with the war. The career of Sparta is one of the most instructive chapters in history. The Spartans were the Prussians of their time. They were not beasts, like the Prussians, and they knew nothing of Kultur. But in other respects the comparison may be made. Their policy was a coldly calculating selfishness, based upon an iron militarism. The result was utter barrenness. There was nothing that was fruitful or spermatic in their policy. They have left to the world nothing but a repellent name, whereas the genius of Athens has enriched all time. Not that Athens was a humane and imperishable heritage of things of the mind. It was Athens that saved Europe from the Persians, and Sparta was absent from Persia and Salamis.

There is no more splendid page in history than Athens's defiance of Persia. Persia was the Rome of that time and ruled the world from India to the Danube. Greece was too small to be noticed in the great campaigns of Cyrus. But when the rest of the world had been overrun and plundered he turned his attention to Greece. He died about this time, but his policy was continued under his successors. When the Persian ambassadors came to Greece to demand earth and water in token of submission the Greek states were terrified, as they well might be. The world was prostrate at the feet of Persia. To resist her seemed madness. As the ambassadors passed on their way the Greek states yielded. But when they arrived in Athens with their demand for earth and water they were thrown into a ditch and told to take all they wanted.

For Greece to stand out against Persia was like Belgium standing out against Germany, only it was a more desperate thing. Behind Belgium were England, France and Russia. Behind Greece was nobody. Athens alone, smaller than an American county, made the stand. She tried to rouse the other Greek states, but they were too timid to respond. Really there is nothing in history comparable to the stand of Athens. Alone, or almost alone, she had sent courage and courage to the Atlantic Greeks. As we see it now her stand was not the senseless, foolhardy thing it seemed, but one of the most daring and splendid strokes of political genius the world has ever known. It was not only this, it was a great heroism. But over and above this it was a noble and generous deed. Nothing in history excels it.

Where was Sparta? Of all the states of Greece she, apparently, was the one to front the Persian crush. As there is nothing greater in history than the part of Athens in this world crisis, there is hardly anything in history more sane and courageous than the stand of Sparta. She promised succor but did not send them. She was playing a double game, ready to take friend or foe. Too cowardly to take a stand, she was utterly incapable of any views that were large, generous or patriotic. Accordingly she made pithy excuses and stayed away. Meanwhile the Athenians, abandoned by the other Greeks, drew out upon the Plain of Marathon to meet them. Their army was pitiful in numbers but not in genius and spirit. One of the great captains of all time was with them. As the forces were about to engage occurred one of the most dramatic and keep the page of history alive and have power to thrill after a thousand years. A little band of armed men was seen approaching. It was the entire military force of Plataea coming to render aid. Athens had once befriended them against the Thebans and they had not forgotten. The fight was fought and won, and again Sparta was absent. The cowardly duplicity, the same narrow, calculating selfishness controlled her policy.

At Plataea Persia was finally beaten. By this time the Greek states had joined up courage and Sparta came and played her part. This is the story in outline. In the background of Sparta has rarely been indicated. She not only refused to help but tried to betray Athens. The whole story should be read, especially at this time. It contains lessons. Attempts have been made to exalt the Spartans, and they did good work at the end. But it is the beginning that counts. Except for some fighting at Plataea, after the Persians had been beaten twice and the terror and prestige of their name was gone, Sparta did nothing. As a whole Sparta's part in the war is one of the most shameful chapters of history.

Sparta is the type of a militaristic state and her history is a lesson to mankind. C. C. HONON.

#### TRADE BRIEFS.

Restrictions placed on the importation into Canada of Hawaiian fruit have been removed. Fruit and vegetables destined from Hawaii for the United States will be free of the importation of all unannounced fruit from the Hawaiian Islands was prohibited as a means of preventing plant diseases.

Experiments are being made in Mexico to determine the commercial value of "mochote," a vegetable wool fibre. The fibre can be utilized for filling mattresses and pillows and the seeds of the plant from which the fibre is made can be roasted and eaten or can be made into an oil similar to that extracted from cotton seed. Samples of the fibre have been received by the United States Commerce Bureau, this city, where they may be examined by reference to file No. 52427.

Manufacturers of Portland cement are asked to communicate with a Cuban concern.

Marine varnish is needed in France.

Toys, advertising and hardware novelties, toilet articles, cycle cars, musical instruments and stethoscopes are wanted in Australia.

Standardized shoes will be manufactured under the supervision of the War military authorities and sold by retailers at regulated prices. This style of footwear can be purchased at prices ranging from \$1.00 to \$2.00 a pair.

A substitute for animal wool, known as "artitane," is being made in Mexico, at a cost of about \$25.00 a ton. The selling price of this substitute, which is in the form of a fine, soft, white, wool-like fibre, will be much less than the cost of pure woolen yarn.

There is a market in Italy for baby carriages.

Crackling Bread.

From the Atlanta Courier.

With nothing else on the table spread, I am at home with crackling bread; I am at home with crackling bread; I am at home with crackling bread; I am at home with crackling bread.

NEW YORK, MARCH 27.

#### THE MASTERY OF THE AIR AND THE PROBLEMS IT PRESENTS.

French and Italian Expert Opinion Concerning Superiority in the Production of Aeroplanes and Motors.  
The publication of the reports concerning the slowness of aircraft construction has probably done no harm, but it has an important drawback. To the aeroplane manufacturer haste is a danger. Though it would be too much to say of the present programme that it has proceeded with due speed, the thoughtful man is bound to ask himself what advantage can be made out of deliberation and care. It is a practical question, because the aeroplane is a novelty. In its earliest stages it stood revealed as very imperfect. At present, such are the advances in construction, it is described by a writer in the Revue des Deux Mondes as "magical," borrowing Captain Guynemer's phrase. This magic is the result of constant change, of intense study and invention.

For these reasons it is of the utmost importance that the working out of the model should be accurate in detail. The best opinion yet published in Europe is that the plane of the United States were, if anything, too sudden. To some of the French and Italian experts, who have closely followed the situation here, it is a little doubtful whether the manufacturer can keep the daily improvements in mind if he is to make his machine put a marvel of speed. There is a very large field of operation for experiment and invention. It is true that speed is a vital consideration. But while admitting the necessity for speed, foreign observers struck a note of warning in regard to neglecting other things.

It is clear that the necessities of Captain Guynemer, which are now being published, that the construction of an aeroplane is a matter of daily, even hourly, preoccupation. The aviator, that is if he is in the class of Captain Guynemer and Captain Duchenne, is a technician, working industriously in the shop, the manufacturer in the shop. Perhaps the most serious danger to the building of his yacht, and even has something to do with its design, is the closest parallel. The most successful aviator has at his command all the devices of the shops, all those magnificent tricks of the trade which make his achievements one of the marvels of the age. The public mind is not at this vital point. The test of the aviator is his technique. If he knows how to

make a machine, and this is knowledge that can be taught, he can always capture the air.

The training and education of aviators is therefore an all important element of success. Some writers believe that it has been neglected. It does not seem so large in the public eye as the written programme of aeroplane construction. There is a facile kind of reasoning which supposes that appropriations of millions will solve the problems of supremacy in the air, and that deliveries of machines will be a matter of course. This attitude takes no account of improvements, the invention of designs, the most complete technical training of the aviator. This training is an affair of science. The opinion of an English writer illustrates the point. He says: "The mastery of the world depends, it is clear, largely on a knowledge of science. Never was there a greater object lesson in regard to this than the present war. Perhaps the most conspicuous example is to be seen in the air. The war has forced men with feverish haste to learn its laws and to develop machinery for dealing with them. It is applied and technical science that is needed." Further experience has only confirmed what has been said as to the importance of gradual evolution in aeroplane construction.

As regards manufacture efficiency of production is the prime consideration. For this it is necessary to have cooperation and agreement with labor and an increasingly high standard of technical training. These things are obviously a work of time. Experts do not seem to be so much impressed by pessimistic reports as the public is. The thing which matters is that the superiority in construction is attained. This is the side which the Germans have endeavored to study. They have been careful to introduce into the training of aviators a crop of new ideas. They probably are not so far ahead here, and the success in combat of the Allies is proof of the nerve and skill of the French, British and American aces.

If new and better machines can be supplied with speed and facility, it seems certain that the mastery of the air will soon be won by the Allies. In striving for this object it certainly is not enough to look at the main point, progress, and the evolution of new machines.

#### G. L. FOX'S "RICHELIEU."

Lillie Eldridge Was "Julie" and Fox Himself the "Cardinal."  
To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Mr. Seymour has asked for the name of the Julie in George L. Fox's production of the burlesque on "Richelieu." Lillie Eldridge, daughter of "Aunt" Louisa Eldridge, was the lady who played that part. The burlesque was written by Schenberg and T. B. de Walden and was called "G. L. Fox's Richelieu." Fox's character was G. L. Fox, and the Cardinal was Richelieu. Edward Coleman played the Secretary of Hades (Baroness). Mr. Seymour also asks about Lent's Circus in East Fourteenth street. Does any one recall that place as late as 1872? A favorite stunt of the ring master, the embodiment of manly beauty to the children, was to call him a boy from the audience while exhibiting a dwarf (or was it a midget?) named either Adrenal Dot or Commodore Nut. The boy being asked his age (say nine years), the dwarf, who would stand beside the boy in the middle of the ring, would swell up immeasurably and say in his squeaky tones, "Look at him, peering in to look at the dwarf, the only one and I am 21. I learn that P. T. Barnum bought out Mr. Lent and opened there November 18, 1872, but whether retaining the old name or the name of the famous showman I've been unable to learn. The circus was destroyed by fire December 21, 1872, and all the animals perished.

Frank Luntz mentions Len Benedict, the once famous pianist, as now residing at the Popple Theatre in Albany. If this is the well known Len, he is now 79 years old, as, according to Austin Brown, Len was born in Buffalo December 1, 1829. J. H. JAMIESON, New York, March 27.

#### THE CHILD'S VOCABULARY.

The Teachers Are Handicapped by the Cast Iron Course.  
To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: With reference to Mr. A. E. U. letter of March 6 I wish to state that the teachers of this city are fully aware of the fact that the average child graduates from school with a shockingly scanty vocabulary. Pupils can spell correctly long lists of words which they cannot use, and misspell simple words which they use constantly.

The present course of study calls for at least 200 words from the child's vocabulary, yet in many schools teachers are supplied with lists containing nearly 600 words to be taught, and of these there are at least 200 words which the majority of the children have never even heard of. The time allotted to spelling is twenty minutes daily. In this short time it is impossible to teach the spelling of 600 words, and also to cover the amount of practice necessary to introduce 200 of these into the child's vocabulary. Teaching from which a child could enrich his vocabulary, is allowed forty minutes weekly.

"O. A. U." says: "Never is a rule of grammar elucidated by the teacher." Such a sweeping and unprovable statement needs no comment. We teachers know that the grammar book contains no more than a list of words which they use constantly. We know that the child must learn to use words in context, and that the teacher must cover the prescribed course of study, which calls for the learning of numerous difficult grammatical constructions, which will be used only by the child who studies a foreign language in high school.

We also know that we are compelled to give 20 minutes a week to the solution of mathematical problems in arithmetic which the child will never use. There are several other instances in which there is great educational waste, but the enumeration of these would require too much space.

"I hope I shall be able to give 'A. U.' a glimpse of the teacher's viewpoint."

JEREMY GITT, March 27. A TEACHER.

A Hundred Years Old and No Slacker.

From the Philadelphia Press.

Mrs. Sarah Miller, a resident of the New York City, has just celebrated her 100th birthday by writing for the Red Cross.

NEW YORK, MARCH 27.

#### THE MASTERY OF THE AIR AND THE PROBLEMS IT PRESENTS.

French and Italian Expert Opinion Concerning Superiority in the Production of Aeroplanes and Motors.  
The publication of the reports concerning the slowness of aircraft construction has probably done no harm, but it has an important drawback. To the aeroplane manufacturer haste is a danger. Though it would be too much to say of the present programme that it has proceeded with due speed, the thoughtful man is bound to ask himself what advantage can be made out of deliberation and care. It is a practical question, because the aeroplane is a novelty. In its earliest stages it stood